

In the Claims

Claims 2, 6 and 16 have been cancelled without prejudice.

Claim 1 has been amended as follows:

1. (Amended) A wafer lifter for self-centering a wafer on a pedestal comprising:

a lifter body of annular shape having a center cavity with a diameter that is larger than a diameter of the wafer pedestal, said lifter body is fabricated of a material that has a rigidity of at least that of aluminum;

at least four support fingers emanating upwardly from said lifter body and are spaced-apart from each other; and

a platform on a tip portion of each of said at least four support fingers defined by a slanted surface from a vertical plane of an outside surface of said support finger, said platform when supporting a wafer thereon leaves substantially no gap between said slanted surface and an outer periphery of the wafer.

Claim 10 has been amended as follows:

10. (Amended) A method for self-centering a wafer on a wafer pedestal comprising the steps of:

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fabricating a lifter body for a wafer lifter with aluminum or stainless steel, said lifter body having an annular shape and a center cavity with a diameter that is larger than a diameter of said wafer pedestal, said wafer lifter further having at least four support fingers emanating upwardly from said lifter body and are spaced-apart from each other, and a platform on a tip portion of each of said at least four support fingers defined by a slanted surface from a vertical plane of an outside surface of said support finger, said platform when supporting a wafer thereon leaves substantially no gap between said slanted surface and an outer periphery of the wafer;

positioning a wafer on said wafer lifter supported by said platform on said tip portion of the at least four support fingers; and

lifting said wafer lifter to a position over said wafer pedestal and depositing said wafer onto said pedestal.